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Bungo.com to Launch World's First Web-Based Corporate Efficiency Portal with an Integrated Suite of Productivity, Communication and Collaboration Tools

Business/Technology Editors. Business Wire. New York: Jul 12, 2000. pg. 1

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Author(s): [Business/Technology Editors](#)

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Abstract (Article Summary)

Bungo.com (www.bungo.com) is an Internet technology company that offers the world's leading information management and collaboration environment for individuals and organizations. The company's mission is to make information available to users anytime, anywhere and enable them to share that information and collaborate from any connected device, including wireless phones, PDA's, information appliances and personal computers. For end-users, Bungo.com offers a complete suite of communication, information management and file sharing tools that include e-mail, LiveMail(TM) messaging, file storage, calendar, address book, bookmark organizer and notepad. Bungo's advanced Instant Sharing technology lets users share any of their information with anyone on the Internet, and collaborate with others over the Web.

Following yesterday's announcement by [Yahoo!](#) (NASDAQ: YHOO) that it is expanding its reach into the corporate portal market, Bungo.com, a leading developer of Web-based virtual desktops, today made public its plan to offer a Corporate Efficiency Portal based on its virtual desktop technology. Bungo's Corporate Efficiency Portal, BungoPro(TM) revolves around an integrated suite of advanced communication, productivity and collaboration tools that help companies improve workplace efficiency. It will also offer Web content such as news and financial information. In contrast, the [Yahoo!](#) corporate portal is based primarily on [Yahoo!](#)'s content- focused consumer site.

Full Text (645 words)

Copyright Business Wire Jul 12, 2000

PROVIDENCE, R.I.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--July 12, 2000--

New system to revolutionize workplace productivity and collaboration; combines Yahoo!-like usability and access with Lotus Notes-type functionality; At one-hundredth the cost of traditional software, use of such tools expected to expand beyond the executive

suite onto the factory floor

Following yesterday's announcement by [Yahoo!](#) (NASDAQ: YHOO) that it is expanding its reach into the corporate portal market, Bungo.com, a leading developer of Web-based virtual desktops, today made public its plan to offer a Corporate Efficiency Portal based on its virtual desktop technology. Bungo's Corporate Efficiency Portal, BungoPro(TM) revolves around an integrated suite of advanced communication, productivity and collaboration tools that help companies improve workplace efficiency. It will also offer Web content such as news and financial information. In contrast, the [Yahoo!](#) corporate portal is based primarily on [Yahoo!](#)'s content- focused consumer site.

A version of [Yahoo!](#) for companies could in fact result in employees spending more non-productive time on the Web, instead of using the Web to improve efficiency and productivity. In contrast, the Bungo Corporate Efficiency Portal was designed specifically with the aim of improving workplace productivity, communication and collaboration.

BungoPro(TM) will be officially unveiled next month. However, the product has been in development for two years, and the company has already entered agreements to deploy BungoPro(TM) at several Fortune 500 companies and leading Web sites. It expects BungoPro(TM) to be powering over five million workplace desktops by the end of the year.

For a year, Bungo.com has been offering its advanced communication, organization and information sharing tools to consumers over the Web with great success. In May, Forbes Magazine awarded Bungo its Best of the Web rating within the "Virtual Secretary" category.

One-hundredth the cost and one hundred times easier

Productivity and collaboration tools available today from giant software companies such as [Microsoft](#) (Nasdaq: MSFT) Exchange and [IBM's](#) (NYSE: [IBM](#)) Lotus Notes allow companies to offer their executives tools to communicate, organize and collaborate. However, these solutions, developed in the pre-Internet era, are cumbersome. They require expensive software, hardware, development and upgrades. They are difficult to operate and require many hours of on-going training and special "client" software. These tools are difficult to maintain and companies must have the technical staff and expertise to handle the "server" software. They are also very expensive and can cost up to \$1,500 per employee per year. BungoPro(TM) offers similar functionality at a hundredth of the cost and with Web-based ease of use and accessibility.

PC's and Internet access for every employee

Recently, major companies including [Ford Motor](#) (NYSE: F), [Delta Airlines](#) (NYSE: DNT) and [Intel](#) (Nasdaq: INTC) announced plans to offer PC's and Internet access to all employees. This is a clear indication that more companies are re-directing technology efforts to focus on using the Internet to improve workplace efficiency and productivity, and not only among executive ranks, but throughout the enterprise.

"Our mission is to provide every worker in America with a virtual workspace," said Sam Fahmy, Bungo.com's founder and Chief Executive Officer.

"Both independent and internal studies indicate savings of over \$1,000 per employee per month. For companies, this is a Web-powered turnaround-in-a-box," he said.

About Bungo.com

Bungo.com (www.bungo.com) is an Internet technology company that offers the world's leading information management and collaboration environment for individuals and organizations. The company's mission is to make information available to users anytime, anywhere and enable them to share that information and collaborate from any connected device, including wireless phones, PDA's, information appliances and personal computers. For end-users, Bungo.com offers a complete suite of communication, information management and file sharing tools that include e-mail, LiveMail(TM) messaging, file storage, calendar, address book, bookmark organizer and notepad. Bungo's advanced Instant Sharing technology lets users share any of their information with anyone on the Internet, and collaborate with others over the Web.

For more information, contact Bungo.com at 401-461-8022 or visit the Web site at www.bungo.com.

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Abstract



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Collaboration on the desktop

Marion Agnew. InformationWeek. Manhasset: Jul 10, 2000. , Iss. 794; pg. 87, 5 pgs

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Abstract (Article Summary)

Although the collaboration-software market can be divided in several different ways, one primary difference is whether a tool provides functions primarily for asynchronous collaboration, such as discussion databases or bulletin boards, or synchronous (real-time) collaboration, such as Web conferencing tools. But new features in both the asynchronous and synchronous markets are blurring the line between these traditional applications. Messaging and groupware tools offer bulletin boards and shared databases as well as e-mail and calendars; project-management packages add messaging capabilities to their shared databases and documents. Collaboration tools can also differ in how they are delivered to the customer. Many companies offering tools that users can install (or download from the Web) on their desktops also offer hosting services.

Full Text (2690 words)

Copyright CMP Media Inc. Jul 10, 2000

[Headnote]

Web conferencing and instant messaging bring people together By Marion Agnew

You, three of your North American colleagues, and four counterparts from Switzerland are meeting to discuss the strategy for a product rollout. The proposed process needs revision, so everyone works on the white board using different-colored markers until you're in agreement. Then you assign action items, and the meeting's over.

Sounds like an ordinary meeting, right? Only you're still sitting at your desk. None of the participants was in the same place. Instead, you all met in a private online room using a Webbased conferencing tool. In the process, your company saved \$5,000 to \$10,000—the cost of four U.S.-to-Switzerland plane tickets, hotel expenses, and time out

of the office-- all for a few hundred dollars in software licenses.

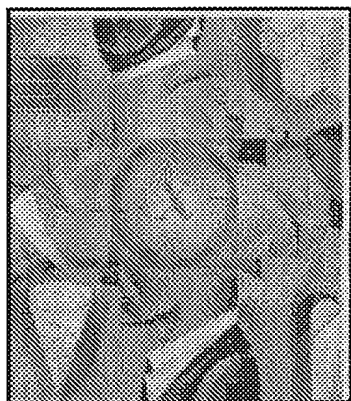
Chemical distributor Van Waters & Rogers Inc. in Kirkland, Wash., uses [PlaceWare Inc.](#)'s Conference Center 2000 meeting facility for situations such as this one. As Ron Miazga, the company's human-resources training director, says, "Sometimes we need to get 16 people from across the United States together for a week in a room, and sometimes we just don't."

Web conferencing is just one type of collaboration tool in a rapidly growing market that includes more conventional offerings such as project-management tools. Graduate and undergraduate students at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania routinely complete class projects using Wharton's WebCafe, a virtual collaboration space based on the eRoom tool from eRoom Technology Inc., formerly Instinctive Technology.

Even if your experience with collaboration software is limited to E-mail and sharing calendars online, you're ahead. David Coleman, founder and managing director of Collaborative Strategies Inc., a consulting company specializing in the collaboration-tools market, estimates that fewer than a third of people with software such as Lotus Notes or Microsoft Outlook on their desktops use the calendar or scheduling functions collaboratively. "More people use their personal information managers," he says, and many use calendars on paper.

Recently, options for collaboration software beyond E-mail have grown exponentially "There's been an explosion of offerings in the past two years," Coleman says. He estimates that more than 1,000 software packages offer collaboration functions. Although the collaboration-software market can be divided in several different ways, one primary differentiator is whether a tool provides functions primarily for asynchronous collaboration, such as discussion databases or bulletin boards, or synchronous (real-time) collaboration, such as Web conferencing tools.

At first glance, software in the asynchronous space is familiar; it includes messaging and groupware tools and project-management software. But new features in both markets are blurring the line between these traditional applications. Messaging and groupware tools offer bulletin boards and shared databases as well as E-mail and calendars; project-management packages add messaging capabilities to their shared databases and documents.



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Wharton's WebCafe implementation of eRoom falls into the distributed project-management market. Collaborative Strategies predicts that revenue from this market, which includes teamware products such as Microsoft Project, is expected to grow more than 36% during the next year. During the next three years, this growth will continue, with revenue jumping from \$700 million in 2000 to nearly \$1.5 billion by 2003.

More than 90 classes at Wharton, including the required Management 100, have used WebCafe. Besides giving faculty a place to post course content online, WebCafe lets students collaborate more easily. "Courses at Wharton are becoming group-project intensive; it's seen as good practice for the business world," says Rob Ditto, senior project leader in Wharton's Computing and Information Technology group.

More than 90 classes at Wharton have used WebCafe. workspaces, which use a browser interface, to revise documents and track messages relating to a group project. "With WebCafe, students have a place to keep our stuff about a project--our comments, our working tools," Ditto says. "It Lets them get their revisions off paper and out of E-mail into another area." Threaded discussions about class content are archived so teachers and teaching assistants can answer complex questions online only once; students can search the archives for answers. The

Intercom feature also provides for real-time instant messaging sessions that Ditto says are particularly useful for specific needs, such as tutoring sessions before exams.

Faculty members have also em



PRACTICE: Wharton's WebCafe prepares students for business, Ditto says.

braced WebCafe. "It goes along with their message to students about the burgeoning importance of technology in the business world," Ditto says. Faculty members who had established a Web presence before Wharton implemented eRoom in August 1998 aren't required to use WebCafe. Citing the other extreme--teachers "devoted to chalkboards and overhead projectors"--Ditto says that "using eRoom has leveled the playing field among the faculty who do stuff online. We can reach a wide variety of faculty with different levels of technical expertise."

Ditto sees a good, if not completely quantifiable, return on the investment in eRoom, priced at about \$10,000 for the server and \$200 for each user license. Ditto uses eRoom and its application programming interface daily. "We build new features for administrative and end-user systems," he says, including a function that matches class enrollment with the membership in a particular WebCafe- workspace. This feature prevents separate registration and authentication processes, which makes it easy for the students, "which is key to success," Ditto says.


This feature of eRoom--its ability to serve as a platform for custom applications--is also important for the traditional messaging and groupware packages. "As the market continues to fragment," says Collaborative Strategies' Coleman, "the more traditional groupware tools are finding more value as platforms for applications built on top of Exchange or Notes."

According to Coleman's figures, Lotus' groupware and messaging product--the Notes client running on the Domino server--leads the market with more than 50 million installed seats, compared with Microsoft's Outlook/Exchange offering, which has about 30 million installed seats. At about \$4,400 for a basic package containing a Domino server with 25 Notes client licenses, that's a significant market and market share.

And a small application, used on the Notes/Domino base, can make a big contribution to collaboration within a company, says Carol Anne Ogdin, founder and president of Deep

Woods Technology Inc. Ogdin, who specializes in the cultural issues of business collaboration, contends that not all collaboration in an organization is obvious.

For example, building managers in a large company could use an application running on Domino to track office moves; that application could also update the company's centralized database of contact information--keeping office numbers for the company's personnel up-to-date. "It doesn't sound like an application with a big payoff," Ogdin points out, "but in terms of finding people, it's outstanding."

Joel Manfredo, director of information services for the  Rouse Co., a large real-estate development and management company in Columbia, Md., is another Lotus user who has taken advantage of Notes/Domino. Rouse responded to a consolidation in the market by implementing what Manfredo calls a "mission-critical application"

built on the Notes/Domino messaging-groupware base.

The company's Leasing Management System, which went live in May 1998, integrates data from 13 or 14 large databases relating to 14,000 leases across the United States. About 900 agents find information-from sales history to physical attributes about a retail location and then check to see whether other deals are pending in that space and how far along those deals are.

Back in late 1995, [eRouse](#) started small. "Phase 1 was how to send E-mail, use the calendar, and use shared folders," Manfredo says. "White people were in class, a team converted their desktop messaging systems to Notes." Now about 97% of their users use the calendar features, a compliance level that has translated to the Leasing Management System. "You can't go outside the system to conduct a transaction," Manfredo says. "It's successful because of that and senior management support." [eRouse](#) has more than 60 applications in project management, workflow, and information dissemination, all of which use the Notes/Domino base.

This summer, Lotus is scheduled to release a beefed-up knowledgemanagement product called Raven. Ogdin says Raven could make it easier for people in a company to connect--users can find experts on a particular topic in an online expert base or search data that records that expertise.

Sometimes archived data or E-mail messages just aren't enough to make collaboration work. Synchronous collaboration tools--such as the instantmessaging function in eRoom--can help. According to Coleman, instant messaging is the fastest-growing collaboration tool, with more than 3 million chats occurring per day.

Companies that want more functionality than instant messaging can take advantage of other synchronous technologies, including Web conferencing. With [PlaceWare](#)'s Conference Center 2000 facility, as many as 1,000 users can conduct or participate in meetings with just a Web browser and a telephone line.

Van Waters & Rogers' move to Web conferencing was driven by two needs: to decrease meeting expenses and to increase communication within the company. As Miazga says, "You can have 13 people in a meeting, and all they have to do is dial up the audio connection, like a traditional conference call, and put the meeting site's URL into their browser." From there, the meeting can include slide shows, participant polls, white boards, or snapshots of a PC screen. Meeting participants can see live software demonstrations without having that software on their PC. According to Miazga, "people melt past the technology" to collaborate quickly.



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LEARNING CURVE: Participating in Web conferences takes ramie adjustment, Van Waters & Rogers' Miazga says.

Van Waters & Rogers uses [PlaceWare](#) for strategy sessions, information-sharing meetings, and training. The transition from a face-to-face meeting to a Web conference is easier than the transition for training applications, Miazga says. "For training, people are used to leaving the business site. [With [PlaceWare](#),] since they're sitting at their own desks, they have the added impact of disruptions. People think you're still available since you're still there."

Even for traditional meetings, Miazga says presenters need to change their style. "You have to make the presentations very media intensive," he says. "You should ask a polling question every three to five minutes," to give the participants something to respond to. "You have to change the screen every minute or so to hold their attention," he adds. "It requires different facilitation skills."

Although it's Web-based, Web conferencing isn't free. The phone call costs and the seat charge for PlaceWare is \$400 per year for the hosted offering. A 100-seat server is also available for \$40,000. Because seats aren't named-user licenses, if you buy 10 seats, any 10 people in the company can be in a PlaceWare meeting at any given time. MyPlaceWare, a scaled-down version for small groups, is offered online for free.



CRITICAL: Rouses Leasing Management System, which integrates data on 14,000 Leases across the United States, is built on Domino/Notes, Manfredi says.

Real-time collaboration is a burgeoning sector of the collaborationtools market. Collaborative Strategies estimates that PlaceWare and other real-time collaboration tools (audio, video, and data) have penetrated only 5% of the potential market; the market experienced a 111% growth rate in 1999 to an overall market of \$6.2 billion, with a 64% annual growth rate predicted through 2002.

Collaboration tools can also differ in how they're delivered to the customer. In the collaboration-tool market, the application service provider model has caught on very quickly. Some tools, such as Integrated Application Technologies Inc.'s Internet Of fice distributed project-management software, are available only over the Internet.

Many companies offering tools that users can install (or download from the Web) on their desktops also offer hosting services. For example, eRoom is available through eRoom.net, hosted online, and is priced according to usage. Wharton's Ditto says that upgrading to eRoom 4.0, which lets students access rooms with only a browser, from 3.0, which required downloading Windows-based software onto a client, increased student adoption of the technology "Lowering the barriers to using a product is critical," he says.

In spite of the success of Web conferencing and other Web-based collaboration tools, not everyone is enamored of the technology. "The latency in the Internet"-the time it can take for the browser to refresh, even in so-called real time-"gets in the way of my being engaged in the process," Ogdin says. Real-time tools don't capture the natural rhythms of a spoken dialog.

Van Waters & Rogers' Miazga is realistic about the limitations of his technologies. Although PlaceWare has helped him reduce travel costs while increasing communication, Miazga says that Web conferencing and videoconferencing won't supplant all face-to-face meetings and training. "The online synchronous connection is simply another tool to be used appropriately," he says. "It's not a wholesale replacement" for human contact.

In Coleman's view, the proliferation of collaboration tools during the past two years is just the beginning. "In the first 10 years of the 2000s, we'll see the same kind of explosion in interpersonal productivity tools," he says, citing personal-productivity tools such as Microsoft Of fice as a market that experienced similar growth during the 1990s.

Consider these figures: Some 3,500 students have already worked on group projects in Wharton's WebCafe implementation of eRoom. When these students enter the workplace, they'll be bringing their experience and their expectations-with them, perhaps inspiring the rest of us. nw

More on collaboration: informationweek.com/794/collab.htm

[Sid bar]**Crafting A Collaborative Culture**

Before you implement a collaboration tool, consider this: According to David Coleman, founder and managing director of consulting firm Collaborative Strategies Inc., collaboration tools provide only about 20% of the solution. Carol Anne Ogdin, founder and president of Deep Woods Technology Inc., says, "Collaboration can be done through typewritten memos if you have enough time."

Collaboration is about people, Ogdin says. "It's co-labor, people working together for a common goal," she says. What makes a particular collaboration tool successful in a company doesn't lie in the differences among technologies, but in the motivation of the users, Ogdin says. For collaboration technologies to work effectively, managers must create an environment where collaboration works. In consulting with Deep Woods clients, Ogdin stresses three steps.

First, you have to know what you want. "I ask, How will you know you're successful? That determines everything." But a manager can't provide an answer and work to gain buy-in from a team. "I ban the word 'buy-in,'" Ogdin says. "'Buy-in' means 'I know the right answer, and now I have to convince you to agree with me.'" Instead, she says, team members must articulate among themselves what success would look like. Getting the team involved in this discussion is part of building the team.

After determining the goal, the next consideration is resource constraints—everything from the geographic distribution of team members to reporting relationships to motivations. Each constraint limits the possible tools for the team. For example, a team whose members are scattered around the globe might have different communication needs than one whose members work in the same room.

Finally, ask what technologies can help you overcome your resource constraints to get to your imagined future. Ogdin says that it's important to remember the real question: "What is the business need, not what technology is convenient for the IT department to deploy" Some technologies aren't appropriate for some situations. Bandwidth limitations can make videoconferencing a poor choice for international teams. To develop a product launch, a shared database may be enough, but as Ogdin says, "something like an architectural design needs a sensory-rich tool to share drawings on the Internet."

Even after answering these questions and selecting an appropriate technology, success isn't assured. Ron Miazga, human-resources training director for Kirkland, Wash., chemical distributor Van Waters & Rogers Inc., says that one key to success with [PlaceWare Inc.](#)'s Web conferencing is the "show producer" role that he and his team provide. By sitting down with facilitators to help them think through their meeting, they improve the meeting's effectiveness. "Although [PlaceWare](#) is simple enough for people to figure out, we want to help them build the best possible meeting," Miazga says.

Ogdin emphasizes that the critical component is users' learning, not necessarily the training offered. "You have to think, 'How can I give people experiences that they can't not learn from? What skills can we introduce over time, one skill at a time?'" she says. Once the user learns the technology and understands the benefits to be gained, collaboration will take off. -MARION AGNEW

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